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"What course is taken about instructing the people within your government in the Christian religion, and what provision is there made for the paying of your ministry?" which elicited the following reply from Berkeley: "The Same course that is taken in England, out of towns, every man according to his ability, instructing his children. We have forty-eight parishes in Virginia, and our ministers are well paid, and by my consent, should be better, if they would pray oftener and preach *less*."

While the Mother Church was extending its influence and prospering so on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, this complaint goes over to England from the Rev. Mr. Yeo, of Somerset: "20,000 perishing souls in Ye Majestie's province of Maryland, and but three Protestant Ministers to break to them the bread of life."

After the Cromwellian period, the most prominent layman and zealous adherent of the Established Church in this then isolated section of loyal Virginia, was that sturdy old Colonial gentleman, Colonel William Custis. He was born of English parentage in Holland in 1633, and with his brother, Major-General John Custis, was settled at Arlington, Northampton county, at an early date. As Quorum of the Colonial Court of Virginia, Burgess and Church-warden, he lived to such purpose that after two centuries, memories fragrant and precious connect his name with the early propagation of Episcopacy on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

C.

LETTERS TO THOMAS ADAMS, 1769-71.

[The following letters throwing light on commercial and social conditions just previous to the Revolution, were written by Richard Adams to his brother Thomas, a distinguished citizen, who was one of the Representatives in Congress, from Virginia, in 1778, and signed the articles of Confederation. These letters will be followed by others written during, and after the war.]

VIRG'A,

OSBORNE'S WAREHOUSE, 5th July, 1769.

D^r Bro^r:

I Rec'd your Favor of the 23d Mar., and note the Contents.

You may depend no Endeavour of mine shall be wanting to prevail on Mr. Coutts and all others, to ship £ Trearon & hope I shall get to your address ab^t 150 hh^d Tob^o with some Ginsang &c. Mr. Coutts has now on board 14 hh^d Tob^o & believe will make up that Quantity 30 hh^d w^{ch} is a poor remittance, had Mr. Hudson Imported to the same am^t, would have had it in his Power before this time to have shipt you 200 hh^d Tob^o but I was too tender of your Credit to desire it. You say Col. Byrd owes you £ 200, pray don't advance for him another Shilling, as I fear his affairs soon will be desperate, being informed he must part with his Whole Estate in a short time, & that its suspected it will not all do, he has desired me to put some Tob^o on board on his acc^t w^{ch} I could not have done had he not been in your debt, but shall try to get enough to make you whole, and as I think, I shall have a better Chance to secure the debt here, this being a most tender Point to mention, must therefore remain with Ourselves. I am sorry to hear you was so unlucky in his lottery, w^{ch} was the Case with me having had tickets to the am^t of £ 150 & got nothing.

Your friends are all anxious to serve you & will do it as soon as in their Power. I hope you'll continue to secure your Credit for the present, and am sure you need not in a short time ask Favors of anybody. If you'll take care not to advance money, those that are your real Friends don't expect or desire it, & many would condemn you for it. If you could so contrive matters, to come out next Winter or Early in the Spring, it would give me the greatest Pleasure to see you, & your Presence would Induce many to Exert themselves to serve you. I have not yet wrote Mess^{rs} Sy's, but shall do it by Trearon inclosed open to you, for your approbation.

I am here selling 80 Negros belonging to my old friends Mess^{rs} Sam'l & Wm. Vernon, of R. Island, this consignment coming unexpected, is most fortunate for me (and am in some Expectation of another Vessel from Mess^{rs} Wonton of the same place). I have sold 20 at £ 42 sterling & hope to average the Cargo at about £ 35 sterlg. I would have you write those Gent^l making them a Tender of your services, I believe they are good men, this I know, that they have been very kind to me. Insure for me by Trearon 10 hh^d Tob^o, 10 hh^d on acc^t Adams & Parker &

10 hh^{ds} for Adams & Jas. Underwood at £10 sterling 70 hh^d. And if I can purchase on a few months Credit, I shall do something more. We have secur'd one of the largest & finest Crops Wheat ever made in this Colony, but fear the Crop of Tob^o will turn out short again, as we have had a very Dry Season, w^{ch} has distroy'd most of the Plants & at this time not $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the Crop Planted, and you know late Planting very seldom turns out much. I shal devote all the time I can Possibly spare in assisting Trearon & hope he will get away in all August. My lumber House in Richmond was set on Fire by lightning a Monday last & notwithstanding it was Court Day, & many People present, could not be saved, but was intirely burnt to the Ground with almost everything in it, occasion'd by a large Quantity of Hemp belonging to some People in Augustia, w^{ch} put it immediately in Flames, & there being four Barrels Gunn Powder belonging to J. Stuart in the House, frightened every body from going near. I went in myself, with a person I prevailed on to go with mee & brought out two Barrels, otherwise must have lost all my Houses under the Hill. When the two remaining in the House blew up, w^{ch} was in about 10 minutes, it was a most Shocking sight, and was very near demolishing poor Cowley's Possessions, but was a lucky Circumstance in saving the rest of the Town, as it beat down the House & in some measure Scattered & abated the force of the Fire. My loss is about £200, w^{ch} I most cheerfully submit to, and think it was the greatest mercy there was no lives lost, as there was many Gentⁿ at Cowley's Door with me when it happened, w^{ch} you know is not above 60 feet distance. Mr. Cortland suffers ab' £100 worth sugar, & many others in the Whole not much less than £1000. Mr. Wm. Griffin stays at Boston this Summer, & has four Vessels address'd to him with Corn, Hemp, &c., where I understand it sells pretty well, I remain,

D^r Bro^r, y^{rs} mo. aff^{ly},

Rich^d Adams.

RICHM^d HILL, 12th Aug^r, 1771.

D^r Bro^r,

You'll Receive this 70 Capt. Woodford, who is at last fully

loaded, and am sorry he has been so long delayed, but such was the Circumstances attending his dispatch, it could not be avoided, and hope we shall be able with what he leaves out & can be procured, to load Capt. Hatch immediately on his arrival, if he Choose to return, If not, Capt. Munford has offered his Brigg that Carrys ab' 200 hh^{ds} Tob^o, but as I am desirous of giving Capt. Hatch the Preference, shall wait til the last of this Month before I engage any other Vessel. I refer you to my letter wrote the House, my opinion of Tob^o, and what may be expected from the Present Crop. I have not been able to collect any money for you, but have the Promise of some soon, in part of your Land. I sent Col. Byrd your acc' a few Days ago, but have had no answer from him. the trouble the old Gentⁿ, our Uncle, has laboured under ever since you left us, has deter'd me from applying to him, he has lately grown Worse than ever, and expect he cannot survive many Days, he has acted nobly by his sons Estate, I being informed by Mr. Geo. Webb, that he has confirmed his former Will in Favor of the s^d Estate, & that he has & will, pay every shilling due, and that from the best Estimate, the old Gentⁿ will have left £1,500 or £2,000 bringing into Acc^t what may be expected from the Crop now on the Ground, a great Relief to that Worthy Family. I have wrote to the House, that if the Carriage I mentioned to you, is not sent out ~~to~~ Capt. Hatch, that they would be pleased to send it by the first opportunity such a One as you should Choose (viz', a plain, neat Post Chaise, with Harness for four Horses, w^{ch} you know my Family is in the greatest want of. My Wife & D^r little Tribe all desire to be mentioned to you in the most Tender & Aff^{te} manner, they are all at Present, I praise God, very well except poor D^r little Eben, who had Grown a fine little, sprightly, Prating Boy, but is now much Reduced with a Violent Illness. that I fear he will not recover, tho' something better than he has been. I can with the greatest Pleasure inform you, that my two D^r fellows Tom & Dick apply themselves very Closely to their Books, & will be under a very Cleaver man next year, who is now a Tutor in Mr. Braxton's Family, he is to supply the place of the present Master at Mr Webb's, & Mr. Braxton sends his Children to Board at Mr. Dickinson with mine. I have inclosed you the Paper in w^{ch} is contained the Acc^t for the relief of the

sufferers in the late Fresh, you'll find also they have continued the Warehouses at Shockoes, and would have given us a third Inspection at Rockets, but the President, we were told, could not Pass any new matter, therefore it was obliged to be postponed 'til another assembly when I am very certain it will be agreed to. Gov^r is not yet arrived, but is Expected ab^t the middle next month.

I have inclosed you Jno. Howard's Bill for £25. 14, wth place to my Credit if Honor'd. I have wrote you several letters, giving you an acc^t of the dreadful Fresh in the month of May last, the loss occasioned by it was very great, but as it has fallen on the most able People on the River who can bear it, and as it will be a great means of keeping up the price of all our Commodities for some years, & raise the value of the high Lands, I don't know upon the whole whether it will be any loss to the Country in General, but rather incline to think it may be for the best. You may depend there will not be any Tob^o made of Consequence, on the Low Grounds off York, Jas. River, or Roan Oake, or Indeed on any of the large Creekes, so that I can't think there can be much more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the Quantity of last years Crop made. I am better off than most of my neighbours & hope to make a Pretty good Crop Tob^o, as to Corn, it was never known in the memory of man so fine a Crop in General. If no accident happens, I shall make a fine Crop at Richmond of everything I have planted, the Crop of Wheat is not large but the Grain good, the price I expect, will be as usual at 4, perhaps 4:3. the Crop of Tob^o in N. Kent County is better than usual wth will be lucky for me & enable A. F. Underw^d to make I hope, a better remittance, as the price I am sure in less time than 6 mo. will advance at least 25 p^{d} ct. and if I had a Credit in England would freely at this time Speculate in Tob^o by Purchasing up what remains in the Warehouses, as I am sure I could make 20 p^{d} ct. by selling again in the Country, under those Circumstances I hope you'll make the most of what may be on Hand in England. I remain, D^r Bro^r, in hopes of hearing from you soon,

Y^r mo. aff^{ly},

Rich^d Adams.

VIRG^a, RICHM^d HILL, 19th Oct^r, 1771.

D^r Bro^r,

Inclosed is a Copy of my last. Capt. M^cCann I hear is arrived, but your letter not yet come to Hand, hope to receive it ~~by~~ next Post. We have had a most Favorable fall for the Crops (not yet having had any Frost and the Tob^o pretty well in the House, but as the Crop was in General late & very small, It cannot turn out larger than I mentioned in my last. We are just returned Home from Winslow's all very well & have brought up with us one of the finest Veals I ever saw (raised at Winslow's) with good stomachs to Eat it. We Dine on part of it to Day, when we shall not fail to remember the donour, & the Land that has afforded us those Blessings, Particularly that of health, a Blessing that but few have Enjoyed for some months past, such another sickly season will drive me over the mountains, or perhaps Cause me to make you a Visit. Since I wrote you last, we have had many Deaths, those of your Acquaintance that I at Present recollect are: Geo. Ellis, Harry Robinson, Jno. Pleasants, Curles (who died a few Hours before our old Uncle), Thos. Atchison, Henry Battes, Col. Rich'd Johnson, Doct^r Duglas, Mr. Crook Norfold, & many others, more in Number throughout the Country, than ever was known to Die in three or four years, but hope the Cool Weather will soon put a stop to these Violent Disorders.

Capt. Hatch is now loaded with 178 hh^{ds} Tob^o & had his Vessel Carried 300 hh^{ds} would have Loaded in near the same Time, I have inclosed you a list of the Shippers, and those that would have shipt had there been Room, amount to ab't 100 hh^{ds} w^{ch} with any more that can be Procured I shall Endeavor to get freight for & send as soon as Possible, as I don't doubt but we shall be able to give Woodford the best dispatch with the new Crop, & think the sooner he is here the Better. I have tried but Can't get any Cranberrys to send by this Opportunity but will send some as soon as they are to be had. My Wife sends you 6 Hams Bacon of the best we had, but I am afraid its too old to be good, I shall Endeavor to have some Cured in the best manner & send you of the new. I have one fine Summer Drake &

two Soarers that feeds well in New Kent w^{ch} I shall send you by the first Opp^y from Yorke River, I was afraid Travelling them so far by Land to bring them to Capt. Hatch would do them an Injury. Whatever money I can collect for you this General Court, I shall remit you in a Bill of Exchange & would have shipt some Tob^o for the Puritan by Capt. Hatch but he could not take it in. I was surprized to hear of so large a sum of money being paid by Mr. Brown in so short a Time. I hope he will take care not to advance for any but good men, and you may depend I shall observe the Caution you gave me, of not Encouraging any to draw but on such Time as you shall approve of. Our Governor is arrived & the Writs are making out for an Election. I believe I shall stand a Candidate once more for the last Time, and when the Assembly meets again, I make no doubt but there will be an Agent appointed, as most of the best Judges that I have Converced with, think there will be an absolute necessity for one.

Pray Cultivate your Correspondence wth old Col. Bland, he expresses the greatest satisfaction in having a letter from you, & has shipt 5 hh^{ds} Tob^o purely on your Acc^t.

Mr. Brown would have given great Satisfaction had he shipt the Woollen Goods from want of w^{ch} we all suffer much & fear the Chatham will not arrive in Time with them, as you know this is the Season to dispose of them, & they are such articles that must be had at any rate. Mr. Geo. Webb is much disposed to do you every Service in his Power & I believe will be Elected a Burgess for New Kent, I shall devote all the Interest I have in the County for him. I remain,

D^r Bro^r, y^r^s mo. aff^{tely},

Rich^r Adams.